United States Patent: US 6,315,213 B1:

"*These superabsorbent polymers are prepared from water-soluble polymers but have cross-linking structures which render the polymers insoluble. By taking water-soluble ethylenic ally unsaturated monomers which readily undergo vinyl polymerization, such as acrylamide, with use of cross-linking agents, a polymer can be produced that is small size, high gel capacity, is highly insoluble, but highly water swellable* "

- When in contact with water, the polymer will begin polymerizing via cross-linking agents. **This quote states that the substance can absorb water without dissolving and maintains its form**.

- It is not super likely this exact polymer is being used, but something of the sort is for reasons I will explain further below.

The blob (What was found):

- White Blood Cells:
  - Weird occurrence, not consistent with the other two claims.
- Cells with no nuclei:
  - Cells with no nuclei are most likely to be prokaryotes (bacteria, and archaea).
- Mike Osweiler:
  - ***Pseudomonas fluroescens:*** It's a *Gammaproteobacteria* commonly found in soil and water. Looked into as **a biocontrol property**, which *protects plant roots from Fusarium and Pythium*, parasitic fungi. (Source:https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev.phyto.41.052002.095656)

  - ***Enterobacter cloacae***: A *Gammaproteobacteria*, commonly found in the gut flora of humans but has also been found to play a role in the biological control of plant diseases.

    Source: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0168165602002298?via%3Dihub

Conclusions:

- **Plant perspective:** Since the only really two common uses I've seen for both species has something to do with being a biocontrol agent for plant pathogens, it's likely that a private plant biotech company was looking into how to use a co-culture (cell culture containing two or more species) that would be effective at killing off pathogens. I will be referring to this co-culture as a "product" for a business.

- **Why the blob:** If the product is being sprayed on agriculture from high altitudes, there's a likelihood not all species will fully "survive" the impact. Since *P. fluorescens* is commonly found in soil and water, it would be fine. However, for species such as *E. cloacae*, which is commonly in the gut, this may need a sort of protectant. This is where the polymer comes in. (Source is my old boss, an Environmental Microbiologist).

- **Polymer substance:** Since we want all these species to survive the impact, they likely used a water-soluble polymer like the one in the patent. The reason why is to protect their co-culture and not destroy the plants.
    - *"We Turned Our Windshield Wipers On, And It Just Started Smearing To The Point Where We Could Almost Not See. We Both Looked At Each Other And We Said 'Gee This Isn't Right'. We're Out In The Middle Of Nowhere, Basically, And Where Did This Come From?"* -Lacy

    - This description provides better context, these are not large blobs but formed a very thin layer on the windshield. Which is why it may better preserve the co-culture.

- **Pathological impacts / Kittens dying:** It may be likely that whatever chemicals used (or polymer) inside the product could be poisonous to humans.
    - **Bacterial species:** They're also encasing the two biocontrol species (and possibly more) which are **meant to kill pathogens.** If animals are ingesting these species, they could be competing/attacking their gut flora (gut microbes) or triggering an immune response.
        - ***P. fluorescens*** has been known to cause infection in immunocompromised patients.
          Source: https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/47/11/1372/281201
        - ***E. cloacae***: Some strains have also caused or been involved with respiratory tract infections in immunocompromised patients.
          Source: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12680484/

        - **These two species would have to be ingested or enter an orifice to cause infection.**

    - **Components of blob:**
        - Whatever was in the blob chemically could have also triggered an immune response in the townspeople. Their flu-like symptom is their body reacting to exposure that made it *inside* their body.
        - There are chemicals that can easily be absorbed into the skin and take certain compounds with them into the blood stream.
            - **DMSO** is commonly used as a topical analgesic that will penetrate the skin and bring compounds through biological tissues. DMSO is an organosulfur compound that is also colorless. It is also a good solvent for chemical reactions (dissolves a solute), also a cryoprotectorant which prevents cell death during freezing process. (The high altitude could damage cells and thus, something like DMSO could be an extra measure in protecting the bacteria!) (Source: My background in organic chemistry and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dimethyl_sulfoxide#Applications)

            - **Whatever else in the blob could have been absorbed through the skin and elicited an immune response in humans. Could also be toxic to animals! And introduction of these species as**

**a biochemical agent may also affect the animals in the area.
Or could have just been mass hysteria of the people**

Conclusion: Likely a biotech company or the government was testing a product (the polymer + biocontrol microbes) on agriculture against plant pathogens. Somehow sprayed the town. The product ended up being (possibly) toxic to humans also they had no idea whatever the fuck was up. Did not want the press to know about it and could have paid out individuals to “lose” samples (Mike). May also be why no one has pictures because they are not allowed to release them? Who knows!